

# STUDENTS TAKE ACTION

PROJECT **Citizen**



## Preserving History

**T**he city of Vladivostok, Russia, recently announced plans to build a public skateboarding area. This decision would never have been made without the efforts of students from Ms. Irina Palachshenko's class. This Project Citizen class—from a former Soviet country with little experience with democracy—got involved in changing their community.

**Community Connection** In Vladivostok, skateboarding was very popular among teenagers. Popular places to skateboard included the marble of public monuments. However, wear and tear from skateboarding was damaging some of the monuments. The students in Irina Palachshenko's class were concerned about this destruction, but they did not feel that laws against skateboarding would be very effective. Instead, they wanted the government to create a positive alternative.

**Taking Action** The students started by contacting people who worked with the monuments and asking about the damage and the cost of repairs. Soon, museum leaders and officials from local agencies that supported sports like skateboarding agreed to work with the students. The students wrote letters to the mayor and members of the Duma (a Russian legislature) supporting a public skateboarding area. The teens then had a meeting with the mayor, who liked their idea but had no extra money in that year's city budget. The members of the Duma, however, promised to consider including funds for the project in the next year's budget. City officials soon started looking for a location for the park. By the end of the year, the city had a plan to begin building a public skateboarding park.



Students in Vladivostok took action to protect historic public monuments.

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**Project Citizen**  
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### SERVICE LEARNING

1. What problem did Ms. Palachshenko's students identify in their community?
2. How did the students go about getting support for their idea?